

Message Text

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SUBJ: TRADE UNION AND EMPLOYER LEADERS PRESENT ECONOMIC VIEWS
TO PRESIDENT OF EUROPEAN COUNCIL ANKER JORGENSEN

SUMMARY: ON APRIL 6, REPRESENTATIVES OF EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONS
AND EMPLOYERS CALLED ON PRIME MINISTER ANKER JORGENSEN TO URGE
THAT THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AT ITS MEETING THIS WEEKEND, TAKE
STEPS TO DEAL WITH CURRENT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. EUROPEAN TRADE
UNION CONFEDERATION PRESIDENT VETTER APPEALED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
OF A COMMON EUROPEAN APPROACH TO THESE ISSUES FOR PRESENTATION
AT THE WORLD ECONOMIC SUMMIT SCHEDULED FOR JULY IN BONN. THE
EUROPEAN EMPLOYER SPOKESMAN TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER THAT THE
CREATION OF A BETTER INVESTMENT CLIMATE WAS THE ONLY WAY OUT
OF THE PRESENT SITUATION. END SUMMARY.

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1. EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC) PRESIDENT HEINZ
OSKAR VETTER AND SECRETARY GENERAL HINTERSCHIED MADE A FIVE-
HOUR VISIT TO COPENHAGEN APRIL 6 TO PRESENT A STATEMENT ON EURO-
PEAN ECONOMIC AND UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION TO DANISH PRIME MINIS-
TER ANKER JORGENSEN IN HIS ROLE AS PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL.

2. THE ETUC STATEMENT CALLED FOR: (A) PROTECTION OF WORKERS' INCOMES AND ADEQUATE INCREASES IN SPENDING POWER THROUGH WAGE INCREASES FOR THE LOWEST EARNERS; AND (B) PROTECTION OF EXISTING JOBS AND THE CREATION OF NEW ONES. THE STATEMENT WAS CRITICAL OF THE JOB-DESTRUCTIVE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGICAL IMPROVEMENTS INDISCRIMINATELY IMPLEMENTED BY EMPLOYERS TO REDUCE THE COSTS OF PRODUCTION. IT CALLED FOR INCREASED COOPERATION BETWEEN THE EEC AND EFTA IN FORMULATING A PROGRAM TO DEAL WITH THE ECONOMIC SITUATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT. THE SAME STATEMENT IS TO BE PRESENTED TO EFTA.

3. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER JORGENSEN, AND TO THE NODDING AGREEMENT OF DANISH LO PRESIDENT THOMAS NIELSEN, VETTER EXPLAINED THAT CONTINUED HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT IN EUROPE THREATENED TO CAUSE POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES AND THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO FORMULATE A COMMON EUROPEAN POSITION TO DEAL WITH THE WORLD ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND UNEMPLOYMENT PRIOR TO THE WORLD ECONOMIC SUMMIT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR JULY IN BONN. HE SAID THAT FIVE PERCENT GROWTH IN GNP MUST BE ACHIEVED TO STEM UNEMPLOYMENT. VETTER, IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, SAID THAT THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONS REJECTED PROTECTIONISM, EXCEPT FOR TEMPORARY SECTORAL RELIEF, AS A WEAPON TO COMBAT UNEMPLOYMENT. HE ALSO CLAIMED EMPLOYERS WERE MORE UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEED TO DISTRIBUTE WORK THROUGH LONGER VACATIONS, SHORTER WORK WEEKS, ETC.

4. BOTH VETTER AND NIELSEN EMPHASIZED THAT THE ETUC PRESENTATION REQUIRED NO ELABORATION FOR THE PRIME MINISTER, WHO WAS TO MEET
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WITH THE EMPLOYERS AFTER RECEIVING THE TRADE UNIONISTS. AS THOMAS NIELSEN PUT IT, "ANKER JORGENSEN IS ON 'DU' TERMS WITH THESE PROBLEMS AND UNDERSTANDS THE URGENT NEED TO CONFRONT THEM".

5. ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN EMPLOYERS, CHAIRMAN OF THE EEC UNION OF INDUSTRIES (UNICE), PROVOST, TOLD JORGENSEN THAT THE ONLY WAY OUT OF THE CURRENT UNEMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC CRISIS WAS TO CREATE A BETTER CLIMATE FOR INVESTMENT. AND, HE EMPHASIZED, PRIVATE INVESTMENT, BECAUSE THIS HAD PROVEN MOST EFFECTIVE. HE CLAIMED THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE A GROWTH IN GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT OF 4 PERCENT AMONG THE EEC NINE TO INSURE A REDUCTION IN UNEMPLOYMENT.

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